The thirteen essays printed in *For All the Saints: Evangelical Theology and Christian Spirituality* were originally presentations at a conference of the same name hosted by Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama, in October 2000. Divided among five headings (Foundations, Sources, Critique, Applications, and Disciplines), the articles hold as their common conviction that a recent surge of interest in spirituality among evangelical Christians beckons, in coeditor and Beeson dean Timothy George’s expression, “reflection on how this theme relates to basic theological commitments and other distinctives of Christian life and work” (1) In his introduction to the book, George invokes concepts that one might otherwise first associate with patristic theology rather than Protestant evangelical devotion: He employs the term *coinherence* not like the Cappadocian fathers to express the interrelation of the persons of the Trinity but instead to set a vision for the complementarity of intellect and piety. (2) He understands “union with Christ” not as the Neoplatonized, eschatological hope of *theosis* shared by the Alexandrian school and Augustine but rather as the new birth or salvation experience to which the Christian life gives sanc-
tified witness (4). Even so, both an orthodox doctrine of the Trinity and the ancient motif of journeying toward beatific vision still undergird the contributors’ attempts to forge a contemporary but historically informed spirituality “for all the saints.” Indeed, George numbers these two basic commitments among seven that evangelical spirituality must always honor, along with a focus on the whole person, reliance on means of grace, obedience to Christ, endurance through suffering and conflict, and solidarity with others (4-7).

Regarding the Trinity, at least one essay in four of the five sections emphasizes how the “intrinsically relational nature of God,” as James M. Houston explains in the Foundations section, entails that human beings can pursue the deepest intellectual knowledge of God only at the intersection of theology and spirituality that is lived out in the shared community of faith (38). Thus do Gerald Bray in the Critique section, Marva J. Dawn in the Applications section, and Wallace A. C. Williams in the Disciplines section all point to the Trinity as the chief *sine qua non* of all authentic evangelical spirituality. Moreover, Stephen R. Todd, whose essay is actually about what evangelicals have to do with the Cappadocians and Augustine, and Robbie Castleman, who urges stewardship of creation, provide a teleological perspective for Christian spirituality by comprehending it within God’s plan of delightful redemption for both human culture and all the cosmos.

The essays do not, however, always speak univocally of precisely what this spirituality consists; for instance, attempts by Mark R. Talbot and Robert Smith, Jr., first to define the genus “spirituality” and then denominate “evangelical Christian,” one of its species, seem out of step with Dallas Willard’s insistence that all Christian spirituality must proceed not from a universal human desire for transcendence but from conformity to God’s self-revealed, triune nature. On the other hand, while Ralph C. Wood shares Willard’s opposition to a commodified Christianity reduced to the consumption of Christ-emblazoned goods and services (44, 92), Wood’s pursuit of “Outward Faith, Inward Piety” also steers a course away from Willard’s charismatic spirituality, which locates Christian growth primarily in individual cooperation with Christ (52), toward one that is more creedal, corporate, liturgical, and sacramental. The most prophetically rousing of the collection, Wood’s essay even challenges coeditor Alister McGrath to see that it is not the journey from head to heart that is the greater need for most of today’s evangelicals but rather the more difficult but necessary trek from heart to head (103).

Yet, such differences in perspective in the end only reinforce the great need for articulating an authentic evangelical spirituality that is the worthy purpose of *For All the Saints*. Others who share its concern for the integration of head, heart, and hands (2) and would take up its pursuit might well begin with Wood’s provocative criticisms of the excessive sentimentality in much of contemporary evangelical worship. For now, thinking Christians can certainly be grateful for a stimulating volume whose varying viewpoints remain nonetheless unanimously and beneficially dedicated, in the words
of Puritan theologian William Ames as cited by each editor, to the furtherance of “living to God” (2, 204).

—Galen K. Johnson